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ABSTRACT

This book highlights episodes in the history of Hispano education in New Mexico, from early territorial days through the New Deal. The 90 years from 1850 to 1940 demonstrate the persistence of the notion that culture can be determined from above, and that schools are a viable tool for determining culture. The myth that Hispanos did not value education came about not because Hispanos actively resisted schools in the territorial period--they did not--but because the schools they struggled to build and staff did not acculturate them to American standards. The administrative centralizers in the 1910s and 1920s thought they could Americanize Hispanos through a bureaucratic apparatus that would enforce standard courses of study and teacher certification. The resulting central bureaucracy proved inadequate to counter local initiative and control. During the 1930s, New Deal cultural imperatives temporarily preoccupied the Hispano community and did some good in preserving past traditions, but they did not alter Hispanos' own self-directed cultural development for the future. Two chapters cover the contributions of George I. Sanchez, an educational psychologist who conducted a major study of the age-grade status of New Mexican schoolchildren and who publicized the poor schooling conditions provided to Hispanos, and Loyd S. Tireman, a progressive educator who founded experimental bilingual schools, but whose emphasis on vocational education exemplified the contradictions inherent in progressive education for Spanish-speaking children. Contains references in notes and an extensive bibliography. (Author/SV)

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